

February 6, 1997

SUBJECT: REORGANIZATION STATIONARY EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE SECTION

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of January 13, 1997, Donalda Viaud, representing CUPE Local 15, appeared as a delegation to outline the Union's concerns with respect to the staff report received by the Board dated November 28, 1996 entitled "Reorganization Stationary Equipment Maintenance Section." Following Donalda Viaud's presentation the Board discussed the issues and felt it was important that the Environment & Operations management meet with the union to discuss their concerns. The Board resolved:

"THAT this matter be deferred for one month."

DISCUSSION

On January 27, 1997 staff met with members of CUPE Local 15 and two of the workers whose positions would be eliminated. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain more detail about the Union's concerns and to consider any alternatives the Union may offer.

The issues raised by the Union and the staff responses were as follows:

1. UNION: What will happen to the Planned Maintenance (PM) program and who will do the associated inspections and work?

STAFF: The PM program will not be impaired. The remaining staff will carry out PM routines in the community complexes. The PM routines at the neighbourhood facilities will be done by the new proposed mechanical crew.

2. UNION: Stationary Equipment Operator II's feel the expertise of the proposed new mechanical crew is not required.

STAFF: All of the new facilities such as the Roundhouse and Golf Clubhouses are equipped with electronically controlled mechanical equipment and more complex controllers, valves, heat pumps, etc. This type of equipment requires expertise of mechanical trades trained staff to maintain. The older facilities have almost all been retrofitted with Direct Digital Controls (DDC) and are also operated by a computer. Maintenance, operating and reprogramming of these

computers requires a specialist. The SEO II' s have been trained to maintain the DDC equipment in their facilities but still require the expertise of persons trained in electronic controls to analyze and correct more complex failures.

3. UNION: The abilities of the SEO I' s should be considered; all are interested in upgrading themselves, some are working towards obtaining certain certificates.

STAFF: Many staff have been encouraged to upgrade their skills by management. Of course, all applicants for the proposed new positions would be considered based on skills, knowledge and ability. The Board needs the qualified staff now in order to protect and guard against further deterioration of the very expensive mechanical plant.

4.UNION: With electronic controls it is usual practice to replace modules rather than repair so why specialists?

STAFF: Workers must have the knowledge to isolate the problem and repair or replace the defective part. Changing modules until the right one is found is wasteful and the fault may not be in a module. In addition, expertise is required to program the operation of mechanical systems in one facility to work in a holistic fashion rather than in isolation of each other.

5. UNION: What are you really trying to accomplish with this reorganization?

STAFF: We want to provide the most functional organization with the proper reporting relationships to ensure that the mechanical plant is maintained to a good safe level at a reasonable cost and the Recreation staff have the flexibility to provide the best customer service possible.

6.UNION: Is making this change really worth the saving of \$70,000?

STAFF: The saving is a byproduct of the reorganization. It was not the primary goal. Recreation staff, associations and users have raised concerns about the operation of the facilities for some years. The last major review took place in 1978. In 1994 management staff set up a team to do a comprehensive review of the services required to provide for the needs of the Recreation Division as well as ensure maintenance is carried out in a professionally. The final report completed April 17, 1996 outlines the reasons for the review and benefits of the proposed organization.

7. UNION: Who will be responsible for ensuring maintenance is carried out properly at the Centres where the Engineer will now report to the CRC? CRC' s have little or no experience in supervising this type of work.

STAFF: The Supervisor of Stationary Equipment Maintenance will still be responsible for ensuring that appropriate technical and professional maintenance work is done by inspecting, auditing planned maintenance and by working with the CRC' s and site engineers. Site engineers are quite aware of their responsibilities. CRC' s have worked with these staff for many years. In addition CRC' s in major complexes have the responsibility for supervising various other staff such as programmers and clerical staff.

8. UNION: Who will purchase parts?

STAFF: The site engineer, same as now.

9. UNION: Who will ensure the Boiler Act is followed?

STAFF: The site engineer is required to know all the laws that cover their area of responsibility. The Supervisor of Stationary Equipment Maintenance will also advise them as required.

10. UNION: Has the cost of truck rental been factored into the saving?

STAFF: Yes. There will be less auto allowance since site staff will no longer travel to various other sites. This, along with the saving resulting from the elimination of the various positions will cover of the operating costs of the new crew.

The meeting concluded with the Union requesting more information about the qualifications for the new positions so they could review the job class specifications. This data was provided although the draft information was provided to the union in early December for the same reason.

No new ideas were identified at the meeting but the Union did indicate they would submit another report to the Board.

It should be noted that prior to receiving the Park Board report dated November 29, 1996 the Union had been advised of the reorganization review process. Union staff were on the team and had advised the Union that the review was taking place. In addition, the Union was copied with a memo dated August 21, 1996 to stationary equipment maintenance staff who would be affected by the reorganization. This memo advised affected staff to consider seeking alternative employment in the City and that management would help them. The union was also copied with the minutes of a meeting on the subject dated August 28, 1997. Two meetings were set up to discuss the report with the Union during December. Both were cancelled at the Union' s request.

It should also be noted that the Collective Agreement with CUPE Local 15 has provisions for bumping, layoff and recall. It is expected that these rights and measures will provide continued employment for qualified staff. The Board has also retained 5 positions that would be available for displaced staff who are qualified.

Prepared by:
Environment & Operations Division
Board of Parks and Recreation
City of Vancouver